

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 6, is conducting remedial investigations on the Wilcox Oil Company Superfund Site located north of Bristow, Creek County, Oklahoma. This area included an abandoned crude oil refinery and associated tank farm that operated from 1915 until 1963 and housed over 80 storage tanks and 10 buildings. After the refinery ceased operations in November of 1963, many buildings were demolished, tanks were sold for scrap, and eventually the property was sold to private landowners. In 2013, due to the former crude oil operations and potential pollutions, the site was listed as a National Priorities List Superfund Site.

The Wilcox Oil Company Superfund project has progressed in several stages since 2013. Since that time, the EPA has sought guidance from the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Oklahoma State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Oklahoma Archaeological Survey (OAS) and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Historic and Cultural Preservation Department on Section 106 consultation process. Between 2015 and 2016 the EPA conducted several on-site visits to include all consulting parties.

In September 2015 the representatives from the Muscogee (Creek) National Historic and Cultural Preservation Department visited the site and stated, "At that time, we were able to discern that there were no traditional cultural properties located within the project area. Due to this, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Historic and Cultural Preservation Department has no objections to the proposed project and offers their concurrence" (LeeAnne Wendt, personal communication, March 18, 2016).

In March 2016, the EPA, USACE, OAS and SHPO conducted a site visit to ensure compliance measures would be met in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. All parties agreed that due to the significant soil contamination associated with the crude oil refinery, that subsurface cultural investigations would not be conducted. Furthermore, the land and surrounding terrain has undergone significant alterations over the last century therefore, the potential for significant intact cultural resources would be low. Due to these circumstances, EPA, USACE, OAS and SHPO agreed the most appropriate path forward would be to develop an extensive historic context document to cover the Wilcox and Lorraine Refineries operations, prehistoric and other time periods prior to the operations of these refineries, land use and change, disturbances and impacts, as well as oral histories from the current residence. The completion of the comprehensive history will fulfill the Section 106 compliance requirement.

The first step in this multi-step process, was to compile an inventory of intact building and structures related to the Wilcox Oil Company. In 2016, all standing structures (with roofs) were recorded and inventoried on Oklahoma State Preservation Inventory Form. This information will be incorporated into the larger context document, but because remediation efforts will be undertaken in multiple steps over the next several years, the cultural compliance efforts will be completed in stages. The attached report of the standing structures is enclosed for your review and comment.

Ongoing consultation efforts throughout the multiple phases of the project will continue with the OAS, SHPO and Muskogee (Creek) Nation to ensure all Section 106 requirements are met. If you have questions or concerns, please contact Ms. Katrina Higgins-Coltrain, Remedial Project Manager, at 214-665-8143, or via email at coltrain.katrina@epa.gov.